

MVSA January 2016 Newsletter

January Meeting

Dues

Just another reminder that membership dues for 2016 are due. A payment table will be set up at our annual awards event but for members unable to attend, checks can be made out to the MVSA and mailed to PO Box 3053, Edgartown, MA 02539. Dues will remain at \$30 for all levels of membership.

Treasurer's Report

Club treasurer Phil Horton reported that going into 2016 and with our annual fundraiser coming up soon, the MVSA is in good shape financially even after the recent \$2400 purchase of T-shirts and hoodies. Note the shirts and hoodies will be available at the upcoming awards ceremony – at cost. In addition, over the next few months we expect to realize an additional \$3500 in dues money. In 2015, we had more than 120 paid members.

Awards Ceremony and Luncheon

Preparations for our annual event which is the highlight of our year, and a chance for members to reunite in the middle of winter to talk fishing, are being finalized. As always the event will not disappoint. Kathi Pogoda reported that prize donations continue to be strong but asked for additional help from members. Donations of items of any value will be greatly appreciated and add to the fun of the event. Suggested items are lures, gift cards, beverages, artwork and even used equipment in good condition. For proper recognition, she asked that members identify the item with their name, mailing address, phone number and/or e-mail address.

The event will be held on Saturday January 30, beginning at 1:00 PM. Members are also requested to bring an appetizer or dessert.

MV Striped Bass & Bluefish Derby

With catches of Striped Bass dwindling not only on the Vineyard and during the Derby but coast wide, President Scarpone said he received a request from one of our members to take the pulse of our membership with regard to possible changes to the current rules regarding Striped Bass. Last year, only 259 striped bass (157 from shore, 102 from boats) were weighed-in.

The two changes proposed to the membership were raising the minimum size limit... or placing a limit on the number of fish an entrant can weigh, (i.e. false albacore)... or both. A discussion was held with members agreeing on the need for action to be taken. One member pointed out that in relation to the overall population of striped bass, the numbers taken during the Derby were insignificant and placing further restrictions on them was little more than a symbolic gesture, but that taking action was a good idea and go a long way toward enhancing the Derby's image as a conservation minded tournament.

Another said that placing a restriction on the number of striped bass an entrant is allowed to weigh-in during the event is meaningless as numbers are so low the fish basically regulates itself that way. (Only one Striped Bass Hat Trick- all four daily pins, was recorded in 2014).

Members did agree that raising the minimum size limit which is already at 32" and 4" above the state regulation of 28" was a good idea. The consensus of opinion was to gradually raise it in annual increments of 1" until it reached 36". Others felt that raising it once to 34" was sufficient. An informal vote was taken and the results favored the incremental increase to 36". Scarpone said he would raise the issue again at the Awards Ceremony.

(Notes from the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Committee (ASMFC) Annual Assessment on Striped Bass

"The 2015 Atlantic striped bass stock assessment update indicates the resource is not overfished or experiencing overfishing. Although the stock is not overfished, female Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) has continued to decline since 2006 and is estimated at 141 million pounds just above the SSB threshold of 127 million pounds, and below the SSB target of 159 million pounds."

The number of fish released alive in the recreational sector increased annually after the passage of Amendment 6 (2003) to a high of 23.3 million fish in 2006.

The number of fish released alive in the recreational sector for 2014 was estimated at 7.3 million fish. <http://www.asmfc.org/species/atlantic-stripped-bass>

The ASMFC estimates that one in every nine fish released alive will succumb to hook injuries or mis-handling.

SFC Joseph Larsen

Bob Lane said the eleven care packages he sent to SFC Joey Larsen made a huge difference and circulated the following e-mail from Joe after he received the first four..

"Well.. I really don't know what to say. I'll start with thank you very much. Today I received four packages from MV with your name on them. I'm sure that they were a "Frankenstein" boxes, meaning a bunch of people threw something in every box. I wish I could thank the association and everyone myself.

If you could, please let everyone know how grateful I am. The boxes went a long way. I pulled out a couple of things and my boys rampaged the rest.

We get "any soldier" boxes from organization often with sundry items and tons of candy. I've never gotten one from an organization with a senders name that knew before, that's better".

President Scarpone said the MVSA would like to do this again next year and pick up the shipping costs.

Used Tackle Sale

President Scarpone said the executive committee is moving ahead with plans for the 2nd Annual Used Tackle Sale which will be open to the public this year. At the December meeting Don asked for tackle donations from members, the proceeds of which will be returned to the MVSA. He got a call from Jim Fraser who purged his attic and basement of used tackle and delivered an entire pick-up truck load to Don to be re-sold.

Paul Bagnall

Our speaker for the night was Edgartown Shellfish Constable/Marine Biologist Paul Bagnall who gave a very informative talk about his duties and the development of the shellfish program over the years. Of particular note was the seeding of more than 500,000 oysters every year that not only have food value but value as filter feeders that contribute greatly to the water quality of Katama Bay Cape Poge and Sengekontacket. He also said he gets calls from frustrated anglers who can't understand why the Edgartown Great Pond can't be opened during the Derby. Paul explained that it is not as simple as running an excavator out there and cutting a channel. He said when he opens the pond, he looks for it to stay open for a minimum of one-two weeks and to accomplish that the pond must reach a level at least 2 ½ feet above the sea level outside before he makes a cut. He also said he waits for a forecast of a three calm days. One on the day of the opening, and for two days after it's cut.

Beach Report

Chris Kennedy sent along the following.

Winter is truly upon us now. We have seen a steady increase in the number of moderate storms and the temperatures have taken a nose dive over the past few weeks. The beaches at Long Point, Norton Point and Chappy are beginning to take on their normal winter profile as well. Steep beaches with berms which show the power of the storms to undercut the shoreline are apparent wherever you go.

On Sunday January 10, Wasque experienced another short-duration opening but by the following Wednesday morning had completely healed. There was and continues to be some over-washing but all in all things are looking up. The OSV trail is still closed but the rangers are on the beach daily to check on the status of all the trails and to open/close sections of trail as necessary due to erosion.

Chappy OSV trails are open for travel. Just be mindful of the changing nature of the beach trails.

The 2017 OSV permits are ready to go to the printer. The Chappy permit will be orange and the Norton Point permit will be camo-colored. Hey, sometimes it's good to live outside the box! Now, the bad news...the Chappy permit fee is being increased by \$20 for next year as is the combination permit. Norton Point fees are being held at their current rate. So, the Chappy annual permit will be \$200; Resident Combo is \$270 and Non-resident Combo is \$320. Norton Point resident is \$90 and Norton Point Non-resident is still \$140. Day passes remain at \$30 and \$60/day. The good news? If you purchase your 2017 permit online by visiting the Trustees website between February 1 and May 1 you can get your permit at last year's prices. After May 1 they move to the new prices. So, on February 1 head to <http://www.thetrustees.org/places-to-visit/cape-cod-islands/cape-pogue.html> and click on the OSV Permit Purchase tab. Problems? Call 508-693-7662 and ask for Bob Mill.

Many of you may have read the recent Vineyard Gazette article <http://vineyardgazette.com/news/2016/01/07/piping-plovers-more-plentiful-fishermen-start-your-engines> regarding the potential for The Trustees to receive a special permit as part of a statewide HCP (Habitat Conservation Plan) permit. Under the terms of the permit, the Trustees would be allowed to open otherwise closed areas due to the presence of shorebird chicks for certain periods of time during the day to provide for public OSV passage. We do not know at this point if all vehicles must be physically escorted through the area or if vehicles would be allowed to pass and re-pass as long as all nearby chicks were accounted for by a certified monitor—details will need to be worked out. To make this work will take additional funds for staffing and equipment, but it is a start towards providing access where none is presently possible. It's not the whole cake but it's a beginning. I expect that this will be limited to Cape Pogue Wildlife Refuge but it is our hope that if the program is successful then additional areas (Leland Beach or Norton Point) can be added in the future. This is a learning experience for users, government regulators and beach managers.

Get out and enjoy winter on the beach. Be aware that Snowy owls are filtering down from the north and can be spotted anywhere out on the beach and Gray seal pups will begin to appear throughout January through March. Enjoy the winter.

“After” and “after” shots of Wasque! (After the breach and after it started to heal!)







Annual Awards Ceremony and Banquet-January 30, 2016 1:00PM

New England Saltwater Fishing Show, Feb. 26-28, R. I. Convention Center, Providence

March Meeting-March 1, MV Rod & Gun Club, 7:00 PM, Speaker TBA, Pizza

April Meeting-April 5, MV Rod & Gun Club, 7:00 PM, Speaker TBA, Pizza